

BERNARD P. CARVALHO, JR.
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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

News Release

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Public's kōkua asked with Safe Routes to School

Students around the island and their parents are jumping on the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) bandwagon.

So far, about a third of Kaua'i's elementary schools have implemented the SRTS program, which aims to make the areas around schools safe for pedestrians and bicyclists, and plans are in place for the rest of the schools to be on board.

Currently, there are five elementary schools in the SRTS program including: Kīlauea; Kapa'a; St. Catherine; Kōloa; and Kalāheo.

Lyle Tabata, deputy county engineer and member of the SRTS Task Force, said that while the schools and parents response to the program has been very positive, the public's support is also critical for the program to be successful.

"One of our biggest concerns right now is speeding motorists," said Tabata. "We'd like to ask drivers to please kōkua by sharing the road with children that are walking or bicycling to school and parents that accompany them and also to observe all traffic laws. The safety of our children is a top priority."

Overall, the SRTS program is going extremely well, noted Bev Brody, Get Fit Kaua'i health and built environment facilitator, who started the SRTS program on Kaua'i in partnership with the county, state Department of Education, and state Department of Health.

"Earlier this year, the state Legislature passed a Safe Routes to School bill the first of its kind in the nation, which goes into effect next month," said Brody. She pointed out that state Rep. Derek Kawakami crafted the bill, and it was signed into law by Gov. Neil Abercrombie.

The law enables the counties to receive a surcharge of \$10 or \$25 that's added on to a traffic ticket depending on where the violation occurred to fund the Safe Routes to School program.

Plans are underway to roll out county projects that improve safety in school zones and encourage more children, including children with disabilities, to safely walk or bike to school.

"Our primary focus is to make our community more livable for everyone by improving our health and environment," said Brody.

The Safe Routes to School Program is on the list of projects in Mayor Bernard Carvalho Jr.'s Holo Holo 2020 vision for Kaua'i.

The vision calls for all organizations, businesses, residents and visitors on Kaua'i to be part of creating an island that is sustainable, values the native culture, has a thriving and healthy economy, cares for all – keiki to kupuna – and has a responsible and user-friendly local government.



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